



California Nutrition Network for Healthy, Active Families



State Summary for Year 07 2002-2003

Partners

The *California Nutrition Network*, a public/private partnership that uses large-scale social marketing approaches, is housed in the state's Department of Health Services. Leaders and participants include the California departments of Social Services, Education, and Food and Agriculture, including multiple agriculture marketing orders; the University of California, Cooperative Extension; the American Cancer Society, American Heart Association, California Elected Women's Association for Education and Research, California Food Policy Advocates, California Grocers' Association, Governor's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports, and Western Growers' Association. Seven different state Health Services programs participate, including California Project LEAN and the Physical Activity and Health Initiative. In total, over 300 government, non-profit and business organizations are partners.

Mission/Vision/Goals

The mission of the *California Nutrition Network for Healthy, Active Families (Network)* is to create innovative partnerships so that low-income Californians are enabled to adopt healthy eating and physical activity patterns as part of a healthy lifestyle. With the *California 5 a Day—for Better Health! Campaign (5 a Day Campaign)*, the *Network* works in the Cancer Prevention and Nutrition Section (CPNS) to increase Californians' consumption of fruits and vegetables to 5 or more daily servings, increase daily physical activity to at least 30 minutes for adults and 60 minutes for children, and achieve full participation in Federal food assistance programs. Principal funding for the *Network* and the *5 a Day Campaign* is made possible by in-kind contributions from state and local governments that qualify for Federal Financial Participation dollars from the U. S. Department of Agriculture's Food Stamp Program.

Target Audience

Californians eligible to participate in the Federal Food Stamp Program and low-income households with incomes at or below 185% of the Federal Poverty level which is \$33,485 for a family of four.

Top Projects

1. **Partnership and Resource Development:** The *Network* currently funds 188 projects, including Local Incentive Awardees (LIAs), special projects, *California Project LEAN* regions, *5 a Day—Power Play!* regions, and *Network* partners that serve as "ambassadors" in delivering the 5 A Day and physical activity messages. To create consistent and seamless communication to the public, *Network* and *5 a Day Campaign* projects and partners are provided with training, tools and resources in the areas of mass and targeted communications, public relations, community outreach, and social marketing. The *Network* and *5 a Day Campaign* host bi-annual Joint Steering Committee meetings to discuss collaborative efforts and provide guidance in four key policy areas—adults, children and youth, food assistance, and disparities.
2. **Research and Evaluation:** CPNS conducts the only statewide surveys focusing exclusively on healthy eating and physical activity. The surveys, conducted every two years, include the adult *California Dietary Practices Survey*, the *California Teen Eating, Exercise and Nutrition Survey*, and the *California Children's Healthy Eating and Exercise Practices Survey*. CPNS also collaborates with the researchers conducting the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey, the Women's Health Survey, and the California Health Interview Survey. The surveys are used to help set state and local priorities and to raise public awareness. Focus groups, pilot tests and economic studies also are conducted.
3. **Media and Retail:** The *Network* and the *5 a Day Campaigns* conduct media and public relations activities, including the purchase of television and radio airtime; placement of outdoor ads, such as mobile billboards and bus wraps; regional media tours conducted by trained state and local spokespeople, supported by public relations activities at the community level. The *5 a Day Retail Program* actively works with over 200 supermarkets, neighborhood markets, and warehouse stores statewide. Active partners, such as Safeway, Albertsons, Ralphs, Vons, Stater Brothers, Save Mart, K.V. Mart, Stumps, and numerous independent grocers, conduct merchandising and promotional activities to encourage fruit and vegetable purchases. The merchandising components of the program include customized point-of-sale materials; ad slicks for print advertisements; in-store recipe booklets and brochures; and a CD-ROM containing advertising copy, graphics, health tips, and nutrition information to be used by retailers.

4. **Community Interventions/Development:** The *Network* and the *5 a Day Campaigns* facilitate the efforts of a wide range of community-based organizations to promote healthy eating and physical activity by increasing access to tested social marketing interventions, fostering partnerships, stimulating community development initiatives, and encouraging new interventions by Local Incentive Awardees. The LIAs, special projects, and other *Network*-funded projects have increased from a total of 48 in 1999 to 188 in 2003. They include 43 low resource school districts, 27 local health departments, 12 food security organizations, 15 African American faith organizations, 7 other state public entities, 12 California Project LEAN regions, 11 *5 a Day—Power Play! Campaign* regions, 4 *Latino 5 a Day Campaign* regions, 14 public colleges/universities, 4 Healthy Cities and Communities, 3 physical activity and nutrition resource centers, 8 Healthy Eating and Childhood Overweight Prevention Grants, 6 tribal organizations, 4 park and recreation departments, 3 city government agencies, 7 county offices of education, and 3 U.C. Cooperative Extension agencies. Five Cancer Research Projects also support *Network* interventions.
5. **Policy, Environmental and Systems Change:** The *Network* asks all its funded projects to change organizational policies and the physical environment and help low income families eat more fruits and vegetables, be more active, and participate in USDA nutrition assistance programs. Policy projects include development of a policy platform, sponsorship of a colloquium to translate food security research into statewide action, working with the Food Stamp Program on outreach and phasing EBT into farmers' markets, and advancing progressive nutrition and physical activity policies in low resource school districts.

Funding

Network and *5 a Day* funding is provided primarily by the United States Department of Agriculture, with additional funding from the California Department of Food and Agriculture, The California Endowment and the Preventive Health and Human Services Block Grant of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Some *Network* funds are administered by the Public Health Institute.

Evaluation Measures

Evaluation of *Network* and *5 a Day Campaign* activities is based on the Social-Ecological Model and assesses programmatic changes at the policy, community, and institutional levels, as well as interpersonal and individual levels. This model is the basis for the USDA-commissioned White Paper on Evaluating Systems, Environmental and Policy Changes in Food Stamp Nutrition Education Programs. In addition to the biennial statewide surveys of adults, teens, and children, the *Network* and the *5 a Day Campaign* conduct a wide variety of evaluation activities, including semi-annual activity reports from all funded partners and collaboration with other *Network* states.

Obstacles/Roadblocks

1. The long-term secular trends for fruit and vegetable consumption, physical activity and participation in USDA nutrition assistance programs are negative in most of California's population segments.
2. Social norms and the commercial marketplace foster unhealthy eating and sedentary lifestyles. Without additional large-scale interventions like the *Network* that address change in the entire state population, it will be very difficult for low income families to make healthier choices than the larger middle class does.
3. It has been difficult to persuade some business entities to redirect resources toward low income consumers and help to accomplish *Network* objectives.
4. Large state budget deficits have made expansion of policies and leadership activities more difficult.

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